

1964

Columbia College Newsletter

Columbia College Chicago

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COLUMBIA COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

VOLUME I • NUMBER 1

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Message from the President



This newsletter for our Alumni and other friends is sort of a topical review of events and plans at Columbia College. It is something of a restatement of what the College is about, too.

This has been a year of important progress for the College. The main event is, of course, our move to a new home on Chicago's lake-front.

We are proudly a small college with great root and long tradition in Chicago. Our identity is education in the creative arts, application and social benefit of the media and methods of communication and the literary and theater arts. Such special educational purpose joins a program of study uniquely focused on contemporary issue and event in the social sciences, humanities, sciences and literature.

All this occurs under a celebrated Faculty each of whom are leaders in the fields represented by the subjects they teach—the outstanding professional in "communications" and the leading contributors to contemporary culture and social benefit.

In a world growing smaller each day, communications and understanding have become the staples of survival. We make no pretense that we can do more than make a small contribution to world understanding. But, we are hopeful that by continuing to advance the educational program begun at Columbia College in 1890 we may make an important contribution to peace and enlightenment.

In this, we believe our concern with the vital education necessary to understand and employ the compelling social and cultural forces of communication gives our work particular significance.

We very much want your interest and have hard need of your help. We believe that our good works this past year are full and fair cause for you to have renewed pride in your College. Come and see!

Mirron Alexandroff

MIRRON ALEXANDROFF

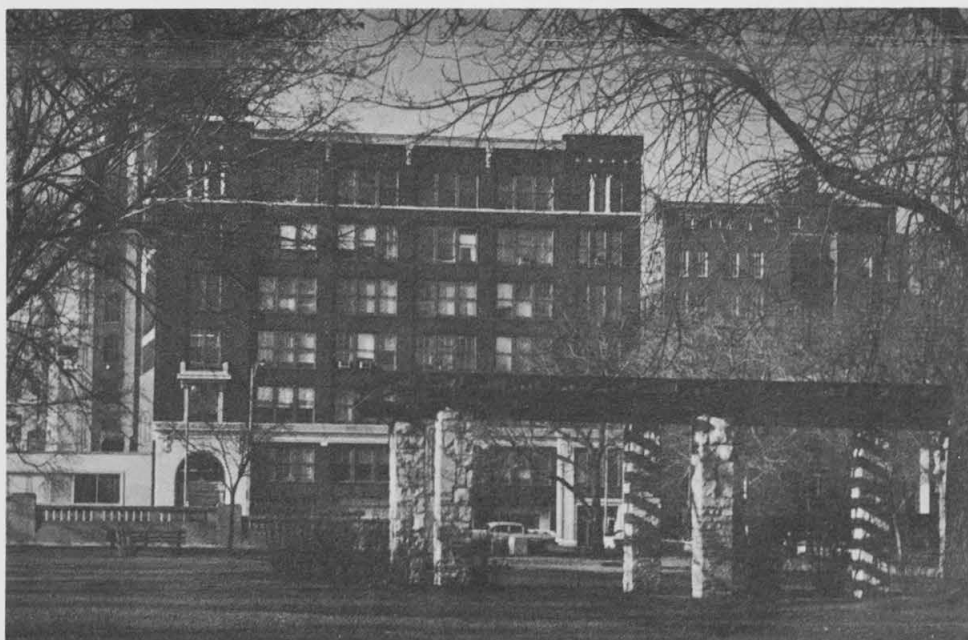
NEW HOME ON THE LAKEFRONT

When the moving vans backed up to the Wabash Ave. building on the night of Dec. 26, and desk by chair, box by box, Columbia College moved to a new location, a long-standing tradition also left the Chicago central loop area.

For 74 years Columbia College has been described physically as a small, specialized, non-campus, downtown college.

On a "Sidewalk Campus," Columbia has educated thousands of students through the years, to work successfully as creators, performers, or educators in fields which employ the creative arts as communicative process.

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FATHER JONES' NEW COURSE

Religion's Impact

On Society



Father James Jones has a simple explanation for religion:

"Religion is that tremendous love affair between man and God and man and man. If man is involved in a true and fantastic love affair with God and his fellow man, vital interest in civil rights, politics and other contemporary issues becomes relevant to his very existence."

With these thoughts a part of his own way of life, and his preaching and teaching way of life, Father Jones, director of the famed St. Leonard's House, is currently conducting a new course at Columbia College entitled: "Religious Movement in Contemporary Society." The course, which was outlined by Father Jones and Mirron Alexandroff, College President, was offered to the students for the first time in February.

Father Jones said he hopes to explore the particular underlying theological issues that are motivating and giving incentive to action in the areas of politics, economics, civic rights, the Ecumenical movement, "peace" movements, and other subjects.

Subjects on the agenda for discussion and study are: "peace" movements; theological issues in politics; relation of theology to economics; theological motivation of the Ecumenical movement and lectures on the Vatican Council (this

discussion will also include comparing theological positions on other contemporary issues—marriage, divorce, birth control, etc.)

"I want the students to do some thinking, some studying and some learning," Father Jones said. "The course has no examinations—we will study, discuss and search.

"I only hope the class will be able to answer the final theological question every student should ask himself, 'Why am I studying?'"

Foreign Students

"Experience" America

"We seek not blind agreement, but understanding"

The American Experience sequence at Columbia, a unique venture in education, is designed particularly for foreign students attending the College. Currently 16 young people from China, India, Iran, Ethiopia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, and the West Indies, are enrolled in the program headed by Dr. Abbas Kessel, renowned authority on the problems of underdeveloped countries.

What is "The American Experience?"

The course seeks a "marketplace" where the student can discuss and question and learn about America and obtain an explanation of his experience with America; which interpretation he learns to supply not from a shallow purse of unconvincing slogans, but from a sophisticated, appreciative understanding of the American society and the democratic process.

According to Mirron Alexandroff, College President, "Being a foreign student in the U.S. is at once a perplexing, often contradictory experience. Moreover, he usually sees only the impersonal outlines of American life and its institutions and often only the dramatic exceptions. The foreign student should be encouraged to examine our nation objectively."

The class discussions have covered in depth, various facets of American life. Meetings and personal discussions have been held with a Federal Judge with an eye to study of the judicial system and the administration of justice in the U.S. Local government and "grassroots democracy" have been explored; questions of morality and social justice; the mobility of Americans and the "saga of the American automobile"; business and labor; the role of the police in the American society; medical service, health and welfare efforts; race relations; agriculture, entertainment, the use of leisure

time in America and educational opportunities of Americans.

The program has centered on bringing the students together with leaders and rank and file participants in the main issues and processes of American life.

Offer Unique Study

Of Mass Media

Under the direction of Gene Dekovic, head of Gene Dekovic Communication Research Planning, new study in "Mass Communications" was initiated by the College this year. The program aims at a heightened understanding of the role and effect of communication techniques and channels in the nature and direction of societies.

This orientation is especially relevant in both current conditions in this country, and in the much different conditions to be found in the emerging nations who want full membership in the 20th Century.

"Our relations with these new nations requires our understanding of their needs, problems and aspirations and an active appreciation of the role that communication does and could play in their speedy achievement of essential goals," said Dekovic.

The courses seek to encourage students to develop ideas and ways and means to apply communication methods and media to educational, informational and social welfare objectives. Senior year study is concerned with the employment of communication facilities and techniques in underdeveloped countries.

College Aids

Emerging Africa

Columbia College has originated a plan for the introduction of a television system as a means of mass communication and education in the emerging new nations of Africa. The plan was developed at the request of several government agencies and will become available to underdeveloped countries that request this unique aid program.

According to Wolfram Dochtermann, vice president and Dean who submitted the plan to government offices in Washington, D.C., Columbia was asked to draw up the project because of the success of a similar plan which it devised and put into operation in Mexico and

Latin America from 1951-1960.

"The new nations are faced with a problem of many languages and dialects in various sections of their countries," Dochtermann said. "We propose a mass-communication system centered on the employment of a television "broadcasting" system which includes a variety of associated audio-visual facilities to occur in an underdeveloped country. The system is designed to operate: (1) "countrywide" and/or "regional" and (2) uniquely, at the local district or community level. Our plan includes suggested operational programs and systems of training."

Key to the Columbia College program is a "Unit Communication Center" which would foster an inter-group exchange of customs and ideas that would educate people to the character of their country, its resources and its needs, he explained. These communication centers would produce films and other audio-visual materials from the immediate environment for local use and circulation.

"Two types of unit communication centers are called for in the Columbia plan," Dochtermann pointed out. "A semi-permanent installation would be established for districts not accessible by road but which could be reached by aircraft. The second type would be a mobile center consisting of a truck or semi-trailer equipped with field facilities for transmitting and filming, a photographic laboratory, printing facilities and about 100 TV receivers for distribution throughout the district."

As few as five persons could man the mobile unit communication center, he added. The plan also calls for a training program for nationals of the host country which would provide for a continual increase in personnel of the countries involved and complete management and operation.

"We are particularly pleased with the nation-wide recognition which this project brings to Columbia College at this time—as we begin our Diamond Jubilee," Dochtermann said.

74 Years Ago At Columbia . . .

Two great pioneers of speech arts education, Mary Blood and Ida Riley, led the founding of Columbia College. Their main concern then was oratory and the dramatic arts . . . the college was described in one catalog as "a school for character building and a preparation of life . . . before entering, all pupils "are required to furnish evidence of good moral character" . . .

The school, located in Steinway Hall, was within five blocks of the "new" Chicago Public Library . . . an excerpt from a catalog reads, "Tickets to the Thomas Orchestra Concerts are so reasonable that the humblest student can take advantage of this rare opportunity for studying the effects of music" . . .

Columbia was endorsed by the Women's Christian Temperance Union Workers (we're not sure why) . . . ten lessons in the evening school of physical culture and voice cost \$5.00 . . . a student could attend college for a year with an investment of approximately \$335.00 which included tuition, board and room, and books!

Pulitzer Winner Gwendolyn Brooks Teaches Poetry

A United States Information Agency cameraman snaps Pulitzer-Prize Poet Gwendolyn Brooks during her creative Poetry class at Columbia College. The USIA will use the photographs for "The American Way of Life" series to be distributed overseas. Miss Brooks, a former lecturer and now a permanent faculty member at Columbia, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1950 for her book, *Annie Allen*. She has also been awarded four first prizes by the Midwestern Writers' Conference, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, the Eunice Tietjens Memorial Award from *Poetry*

Magazine, Mademoiselle Merit Award, and two Guggenheim Fellowships. In 1957, she was named one of 100 Outstanding Chicagoans by Loyola University. Miss Brooks' Columbia College course in "Creative Poetry" includes a study of both poetic technique and modern poets.

In Depth: Visual Communication

The introduction this year of a new basic study program in *visual communication* gives an exciting new dimension to the College's concept of "total communication." The new course sequence, based on a contemporary application of the *Bauhaus* concepts, gives all students an important new esthetic and consequent practical basis for study of particular communication methods and media.

Students investigate the phenomena of form, space, color, motion and texture and seek an understanding of the visual environment. This study adds an essential dimension to communication—arts education, which conventional college curricula in the subject have largely ignored.

The new "Visual Communications" Faculty, headed by Irving Titel, Art Director & Vice President of Grant-Jacoby, one of America's leading art and design agencies, also includes Lyle Mayer, President, Ross & Mayer Photography Inc., and Aubrey Amey, design consultant.



COLLEGE'S NEW TRUSTEES



SEYMOUR GALE



ALFRED PERLMAN



HARRY BOURAS



ERWIN A. SALK

A representative profile of the Columbia College Board of Trustees includes Chairman Seymour Gale, senior partner in the public accounting firm of Gale-Takahashi & Co.; Alfred Perl-

man, vice president of Browne & Storch, Inc.; Harry Bouras, Columbia faculty member and acclaimed artist; and Erwin A. Salk, president, Salk, Ward & Salk.

New Home

Continued from page 1

Now, in a giant expansion step forward, the college has moved to a Lake Shore drive building with the whole lake front as a campus.

The college move, when completed, will cost approximately \$250,000. Rental contract at the Lake Shore-Ohio building totals \$200,000 and remodeling and new equipment swelled the total by an additional \$50,000.

While 250 students are adjusting their commuting schedules to the college's new address, and may be wondering if the "old school" will still be the same, nostalgia involved in the move is fleeting emotion for Mirron Alexandroff, Columbia President.

"Mortar and bricks can be described and counted as can numbers of buildings and students and faculty members. But, first, our college is an idea and a spirit," he said. "We have achieved a college organized to educate and attend to the student as an individual and to provide him with a challenging intellectual experience and a practical beginning to his way of professional life. The learning process is significantly helped by the new location."

The "spirit" of the college is reflected realistically in the more than 100 Columbia graduates working in leading creative and administrative positions in Chicago television, radio, theater and motion pictures.

In 1948, Columbia was among the first colleges to install a complete professional television studio and develop a full curriculum of television subjects. And television remains an important area of study concentration.

At the new location, remodeling involves construction of a new television studio and the installation of equipment and facilities paralleling major television stations. All classrooms will be fully equipped for practical study in television, radio, journalism, and the theater and speech arts. The liberal arts pro-

gram stresses the study of contemporary society.

Why does a college undertake the upheaval involved in a move?

"Perhaps, in this age of bigness, it is illusory for a college as small and unheralded as Columbia to exist—or, more surely it is audacious for it to set out to grow better and stronger," the college president said.

"However, our determination to provide the vital education necessary to understand and employ the compelling social and cultural forces of communication makes such effort importantly worthwhile.

"Besides, it was a wonderful Christmas present for all our students and faculty."

Things To Come . . .

A long range plan for unusual educational opportunities abroad is being developed for Columbia College students . . .

The new program seeks to offer one to two years of study in Sweden, Italy or Germany. The general curriculum will involve three months of study in film, three months in theatre, and three months in radio. In Sweden, the theatre segment of study held at the Royal Academy Theatre, will be under the direction of the famed director Ingmar Bergman. In other film centers, students will also be working with the finest talent medium.

The program, as planned, will afford junior and senior students the opportunity to work under the professional tutorage of the world's leading television, theatre, film, and opera directors, to provide practical training in the photographic, motion pictures, television and dramatic arts.

Also in the immediate future for Columbia . . .

The College plans a radio station to provide on-the-air broadcasting experience for students; the opportunity to

create original broadcast material and facilities to examine major issues in the news and public affairs fields.

A radio station at Columbia will further enlarge the College's program in the fields of mass communication. The station's facilities will also be offered to other colleges of the community so that significant work of many institutions can be widely aired.

In the planning stages—is the publication of a Columbia College LITERARY AND CULTURAL REVIEW, a magazine which will highlight outstanding new writing in the Midwest, and seek to revitalize Chicago's great innovating literary traditions.

According to Mirron Alexandroff, College President, the publication will be edited by a major literary figure.

Only The Doers Teach

It is often said that, "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches."

This unhappy Bernard Shaw observation is far from the truth at Columbia College.

Only the *doers* teach . . . with great benefit to the school.

Few colleges can boast an equally expert faculty having such everyday occupation with the realities of the subjects they teach. Education at Columbia College has the meaningful excitement made real by its attachment to the whole social process.

Columbia College is privileged to have distinguished people on the faculty: Dr. Abbas Kessell, renowned authority on underdeveloped countries and current social issues; Harry Bouras, acclaimed artist and master scholar; WGN-TV television director Thane Lyman; Harry Patrakis, celebrated novelist; Al Parker, Chicago radio personality; Jay Levenson, advertising agency executive; Jack Conroy, critic, author, and inspiration for many major American writers; Dr. Ira Kipnis, distinguished historian; Edmond Eger, executive director of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations; motion pictures directors, Gordon Weisenborn and Fred Lasse; William Braden, Chicago Sun-Times journalist; Eugene Zemens, executive director of the John Howard Association; Lucille Strauss and Alan Peters, eminent drama directors; Ken Ponte, WBBM-TV art director; Edward Morris, WTTW director of development; Don DeMicheal, editor of Downbeat Magazine; and many others.

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